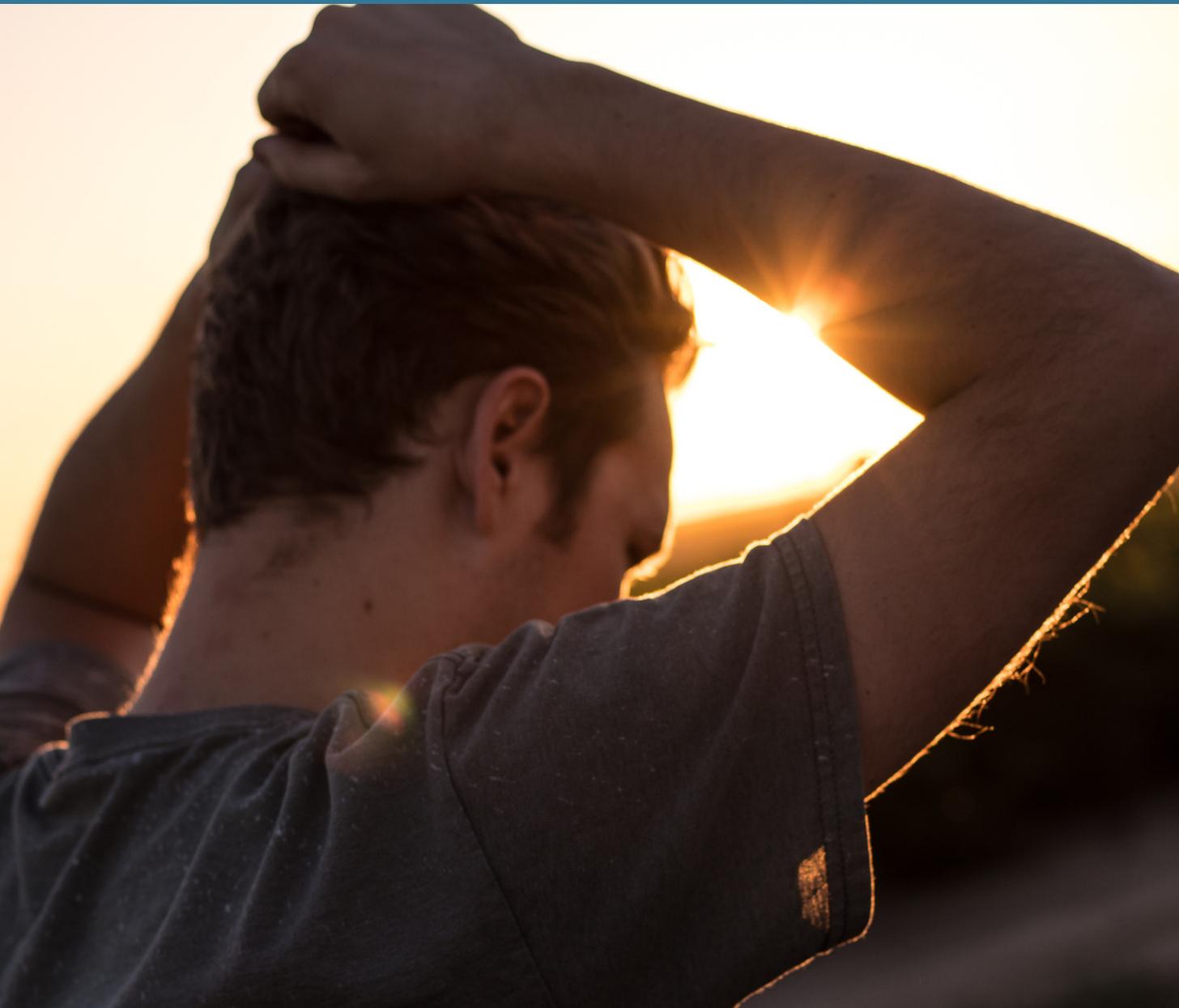
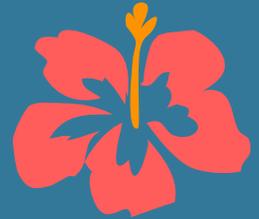


7 WAYS TO
**SALVAGE
YOUR
VACATION**

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Travel*



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No one likes it when a vacation goes awry. Not you. Not your travel professional. Not the travel company you are traveling with. Those who frequently travel know there are some bumps in the vacation road. A missed flight, a delayed flight, rough seas, lost passport, endless rain or cooler than expected weather, or the all-too-common digestive issues (that guy Montezuma). Those who do travel more often tend to roll with those bumps and challenges more easily than those who travel less.

Still, what do you do when your vacation becomes a struggle? Here are a few things to consider.

Purchase travel insurance

You knew I was going to say that, right? You have no idea how many stories I've heard about travelers who had a calamity that could've been saved by travel insurance. And, even more that were so grateful they had it. It's not a panacea but it can alleviate a fair portion of the grief.

We never want it until we need it and when considering the cost of travel insurance to the overall vacation expense – it's minimal. Plus, you may be more likely to pay out more than what the insurance cost if something was to happen.



Know the Risks involved

This means if you are cruising during hurricane season, or in the winter months when the seas are bit rougher then you need to take that into consideration. A brand-new resort or a recent change in management/staff is more likely to have some service issues and not have their A-game.

Having this in mind will help with awareness and manage expectations of what **might** go wrong. I have an email I send out about rain on your vacation – it's still your vacation even when Mother Nature isn't cooperating.

Stay Calm – and Carry On

Getting your feathers ruffled will only add to the grief. Yes, this is easier said than done, especially for those like me who have a wee bit of an “Irish temper”. This is when I need to rely on my English side to calm myself. Very few situations are resolved with someone screaming in their face.

I was at the Atlantis Resort in Nassau one day and a man was **red-faced** and screaming at the guest relations agent. She was near tears. He wanted an upgrade and felt deserving of it. The section where he was reserved was sold out – though he didn't seem to care. She finally walked away and security was called to escort him outside to cool down.

Honey attracts kindness and help more than vinegar. Even if you have to walk away and regroup your thoughts, stay calm!



Accentuate the Positive – Eliminate the Negative

Your vacation may have completely gone off the rails but I am sure there are still some things you can look at with joy.

We were at Disney World for the Night of Joy concert series and it began to rain. Really downpour. We could've called it a night and went back to our resort hotel in a huff. Instead, we grabbed ponchos in the nearby gift shop (much to my husband's chagrin) and carried on.

It's a great memory; we still have those ponchos and we use them every chance we get.

Keep Your Sense of Humor

Laughter is a very positive thing and can immediately change the tune of the vacation. Remove yourself from the situation from “this is happening to me” to “this is simply happening”.

I remember getting on the city bus in Venice to get to our hotel outside Venice proper in Mestre. The bus stopped at the end of the street where our hotel was located.

We could SEE our hotel but we were SURE the bus was going to go down the street, do a U-turn, and drop us off in front of our hotel. We picked up the bus in front of our hotel to go to Venice.



Three hours later we ended up in Verona and the bus driver pulled over, turned the bus off and got out. It was a shift change. This was at midnight. We burst out laughing! Really, what more could we do. It's still such a funny memory to us today. We thought we were world travelers and knew what we were doing.

Contact Your Travel Professional

This really should've been the no. 1 item on the list. One of the roles of your travel agent is to be your advocate. Chances are they have either experienced your situation, or they've had a client or colleague who has had your situation. If it's something new then, no worries, they have the contacts and should work diligently to resolve the issue - if it can be done.

I'm fairly tenacious. I like an end result to things and I will keep working it until I get an appropriate answer. (key word – appropriate) When something goes wrong I do my very best to intercede and assist the client, even if it means providing some love from my own pocketbook.

Sometimes there are situations that are completely out of the control of the travel professional. We can't control the behavior of someone else; I had a colleague share with me that her client wanted a refund for their entire week's stay at an all-inclusive resort because the client saw roadkill on the road in Jamaica. True story.

It's a Memory

If you follow me at all then you know this is a running theme for me and my family. The good. The bad. The weird... and we've all had some weird ones. It's a memory.

Really, when it comes down the last breath we take it's all memories. Nothing else can go with us to the next stage. We look back on our memories as stories of our lives. We laugh. We cry. We cherish each and every memory. So, get out there and make some memories!

